



Director of Central Intelligence

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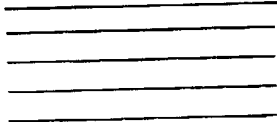
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IRAN:

US Frigate Challenged in Persian Gulf [REDACTED]

The challenge by three Iranian naval speedboats yesterday of the frigate USS Halyburton in the northern Persian Gulf was an unusually aggressive response to a routine maritime interception in international waters of Iranian dhows suspected of violating sanctions against Iraq.

An Iranian crewman asked the Halyburton to leave Iranian territorial waters after the boats had approached the Halyburton at high speed,

[REDACTED]

- Sailors in one of the boats had begun loading its forward gun and brought what appeared to be a shoulder-fired rocket launcher on deck.

- The incident ended peacefully, although the Halyburton conducted an evasive maneuver as one dhow passed close by in an apparent act of defiance [REDACTED]

US encounters with vessels in the Gulf have not typically led to such confrontations, but, during the past three months, sanctions violators in the Gulf have adopted more aggressive tactics to avoid interception.

Some have used Iranian territorial waters for safehaven, called for Iranian naval assistance, and have rammed or tried to ram US ships.



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